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THE OLD CHURCH, QUINCY, MASS.

Built 1732.



AN  
HISTORICAL SKETCH  
OF THE  
OLD CHURCH, QUINCY, MASS.

BY  
REV. FREDERIC A. WHITNEY.

FROM THE NEW ENGLAND HISTORICAL AND GENEALOGICAL REGISTER.



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## THE OLD CHURCH, QUINCY.

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The accompanying engraving represents the church belonging to the ancient religious society of Braintree, which, in 1792, became the first society of Quincy, on the incorporation of that town. Quincy was, indeed, the original settlement; the Mount Wollaston; the North Precinct of Braintree. This church was taken down in 1828, on the completion of the present elegant stone edifice. Here, two presidents of our nation, John Adams, and John Quincy Adams his son, were baptized, and here they regularly worshipped. The imposing funeral services at the burial of President John Adams in July 1826, were held in this church. Here too, was baptized, January 16, 1736-7, John Hancock, the patriot, President of the Continental Congress, by his father, Rev. John Hancock, fifth pastor of the church. The church has thus an historic name.

This engraving was originally made for the *History of Quincy*, published in 1827, by the late Rev. George Whitney of Roxbury, oldest son of the last pastor of the ancient church. The writer of the present sketch prepared a portion of it, some years since, for another publication. At the request of the editor of the *Register*, he has revised and enlarged the same, and sent it with the engraving for insertion in this number.

The church was built in the ministry of Rev. John Hancock, who was ordained Nov. 2, 1726. A record by him informs us: "It was raised July 27<sup>th</sup> 8<sup>th</sup> 9, 1731 in peaceable times." Before its erection, the society worshipped in a stone church which stood near the present Second Congregational church, on Hancock street. This old stone church remained until Feb. 18, 1747-8, when a vote passed to sell it to the highest bidder. It was sold to Serg. Moses Belcher and Mr. Joseph Nightingale, for £100 old tenor. Whether or not this was the original church edifice of the society cannot be determined. In the absence of certain testimony, I incline to the belief that there had been an earlier building than the old stone church, probably on about the same site.

The church which we commemorate did not arise without many town meeting debates and votes. From the precinct records we learn that as early as Nov., 1695, a vote was passed for the erection of a new building, and there the matter was left. Dec. 22, 1729, the vote was again taken and decided in the affirmative.

"January 5, 1729-30," say the records: "Then, after a considerable debate of the precinct about a place where to set the said meeting-house, a vote was asked whether it should be set at Col. Quincy's gate; it passed in the negative.

"Then, whether where the old meeting-house stands, or near unto it; it passed in the negative.

"After more debate upon a place where the said meeting-house

should be set, the Moderator was desired to ask a vote whether the precinct would set it at the ten mile stone, or near unto it ; it passed in the affirmative."

This ten mile stone now stands, a venerable relic, against the land of Lemuel Brackett, Esq., a little north from the site selected, and marking the distance from Boston by "the old way," over Milton Hill, and not, as of late years travelled, over Neponset turnpike and bridge.

"January 13, 1730-31. The question where the meeting-house should be placed was again discussed at the meeting. The question was put whether the said House should be erected on the training field within the said precinct, as near to the west corner of the land of Ensign Samuel Baxter, as the land would admit of ; it passed in the affirmative."

The church raised, as we have seen, in July 1731, was dedicated, October 8, 1732. "The text preached upon at the dedication," says the minister, Rev. Mr. Hancock, "was Isaiah, lx chapter, 13th verse." The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was then administered. Upon this Sabbath, also, we began to read the Holy Scriptures in\* course, in the public assembly. The portion then read was 1 Kings, 8th chapter. The Sabbath following we began the book of Job and the Gospel of St. Matthew.

"Deo Optimo Maximo, laus et gloria."

"Madam Norton then presented to the church a very handsome velvet cushion for the pulpit."

Thus much for the early erection of the old church. Something may be told of its after history. The church underwent repairs at different times; and in 1805, under the ministry of Rev. Mr. Whitney, being found too small for the accommodation of the society, it was opened through the centre, and a large addition inserted, to be presently described, by which more pews were obtained, and its general appearance was greatly improved. At this time, the square pews in the body of the church gave place to the modern pews ; the square form being retained to the last, against the walls. The following notice from the *History of Quincy*, describes its dimensions and appearance in 1827, the year in which the accompanying engraving was made. The old sounding-board hung above the pulpit.

"The dimensions of this house since the last alteration are as follows : Width, 56 feet; length, 61 feet; height of tower to bell deck, 50 feet; height of cupola from bell deck, 25 feet; height of ball above the vane from the ground, 75 feet. The appearance of the church, inside as well as out, is still very respectable. There are 87 pews on the lower floor, and all painted throughout. The galleries as well as the roof are supported by four large pillars which give the house rather a solemn and imposing appearance. The pulpit is in the ancient style of building—handsomely carved—with one flight of stairs. Below is the communion table forming the front part of a large pew, according to ancient custom, made for the accommodation of the Deacons, or, perhaps, for the Ruling Elders. In

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\* This custom was adopted at the old South church, Boston, April 24, 1737. See Wisner's *Hist. Old South Church*, 1830, notes p. 105.

front of the gallery for the choir of singers is a handsome clock, presented to the society by two ladies; Madam Abigail Adams, wife of President Adams, Sen., and Madam Esther Black, widow of the late Moses Black, Esq."

The subjoined diagram, abridged from the original, represents the division of the ground floor after the alterations of the building in 1805, and when it was taken down in 1828. Square pews, as has been said,

Ground Plan of Church.

N O R T H . — *Fifty-six feet.*

*Tower.*

[illegible]

For complete list of owners and occupants, see page 8.

were retained around the walls. As the dimensions, when the church was taken down, were sixty one feet by fifty-six, and, as fifteen feet were added in the width, in 1805, the original size was sixty-one by forty-one. At first the galleries were reached by stairs in the west corners of the church as customary in early times, and all the pews were



square. There were two rows of body seats in front, on which were seated men and women on opposite sides. Behind these were two rows for the singers. When the singers stood, they faced each other, with a partition between them, on which to lay their books. The Deacons sat in their place before the pulpit and lined off the Psalm. Mr. Lemuel Brackett, who was born in 1780, and is of the best authority on these matters of and near his time, informs me that when he was a boy, Mr. Babcock, who afterwards removed to Milton, led the singing, using a pitch-pipe.

At length a change was made. The stairs in the corners were removed. The west gallery was enlarged for the singers by adding the swell in front. Deacon Pierce, carpenter from Dorchester, was employed by the town to make these alterations, about 1793, or '94. He converted the body seats above named into pews, and the singers went into the gallery, and the poor were seated in a pew by the pulpit. Mr. Pierce at the same time, repaired the damage which the tower had sustained by lightning several years before. The lightning had destroyed the belfry, so that the bell had remained quite uncovered for many years. Rev. Mr. Wibird had long urged the repairing of the tower, which in its dilapidated state, brought merited reproach upon the town. When the stairs were removed from the west corners of the church, it was necessary to provide other means for reaching the galleries. The first porch on the south of the church was of one story only, without stairs; and the stairs in the tower on the north did not connect with the main building. Indeed I am credibly informed that the tower was not framed into the main building, but rather stood against it, so that in a furious gale it was once twisted a little from its proper position, and persons could look between it and the building. This great gale occurred while a military review was held in the north part of the town at the Farms; and the tents of the soldiers were blown down and other damage sustained. The small porch on the south was sold to Mr. James Brackett, father of Mr. Lemuel, who removed it to Germantown (the south eastern extremity of Quincy), and affixed it to the old stone house there which then belonged to him. A new two story porch was erected by Mr. Pierce, with stairs to the south, or women's gallery, and also to the south end of the west gallery, which remained when the church was taken down. Communication was also made with the tower on the north, by which access was had to the men's gallery, and also to the north end of the west gallery.

The removal of the singers from the seats before the pulpit to the gallery was not effected without some solicitation. They were at first quite unwilling to go up. But means were employed which, both before and since that period, have been found most efficacious for changing even the stubborn will. Mr. James Brackett, above named, chairman of the committee on the alterations, made a supper for the singers at his house. A fine festival was enjoyed, and the singers were no longer unwilling to go into the gallery. My informant further relates that among them at the feast, was Mr. Joseph Bass, whom many of the citizens of Quincy will remember as reaching a great age, and also his brother Mr. Hezekiah Bass who played the bass-viol. This instrument was first used in the church

when the singers changed their seats. Some of the congregation were much offended at the introduction of stringed instruments. One old man rose up and left, saying that "he did not want to go to God's House to hear a great fiddle."

On the removal of the corner stairs, room was made for pews below and above. March 3, 1800, an article in the warrant for a town meeting is in these words,—“To know if the Town will sell the floor where the stair ways was in the gallery.” Whereupon,—“Voted that the floor where the old stair ways was, the vacancy in the gallery be appropriated for the use of the black people to sit in.” Large square pews, somewhat elevated, were built in the corner of the west, or singers' gallery on this space here referred to; and the few colored persons in town were accustomed to sit there. In the appendix to the historical discourse in 1855, on the hundredth anniversary of the formation of the first church in Templeton, Mass., by Rev. Edwin G. Adams, junior pastor, may be seen a diagram on which these elevated corner pews are well represented.

At a Town meeting May 5, 1800, just three months after the ordination of Rev. Mr. Whitney, “Voted Moses Black Esq., Mr. Thomas Pratt, Peter B. Adams, Esq., be a committee, and are hereby empowered to sell the floor on the back part of the end galleries sufficient to make a row of pews of.”

This vote does not appear to have been carried into effect. No pews were ever built in the north or men's gallery. And in the south gallery, a few pews were, several years after, built in the east end, leaving more than half the gallery in free seats for women. There was originally a row of pews on the back of the west gallery, and several of them in the middle were subsequently taken away to leave more space for the singers.

1804, Nov. 5. “Moses Black, Esq., Benjamin Beale, Esq., Mr. Thomas Greenleaf, Capt. John Hall, Peter B. Adams, Esq. were chosen to consult with some architect upon the plan of an enlargement of the house and to report to the town.”

1805, March 4. “This committee is empowered to contract with any person or persons that may incline to undertake the work, provided satisfactory bonds be given to the town that the house shall not be injured, and to be left in as good repair as it now is, they having the ground for their benefit.” Voted also, “that the meeting house shall not be enlarged more than 15 feet, nor less than 12 feet.”

The extreme caution of the town, evinced by these votes, not to be imposed upon by any fraudulent contractor in so momentous an enterprise as sawing apart a meeting house, sixty-one by forty-one, and inserting fifteen feet is most admirable. Mr. Bates of Weymouth, undertook the work; and, by the sale of new pews which he gained, the contract was very profitable to him. The town was furthermore so well satisfied that they had sustained no “injury”—that his bonds were not forfeited.

1805, July 22. “Voted to shingle all the old part of the meeting house, which Mr. Bates has not contracted to do; and that the subject be referred to the committee on alterations.”

The enlargement of the church here described, was effected by sawing the building, lengthwise with the ridge pole, from North to

south, moving the front, or west portion of the same fifteen feet forward, and framing in the intermediate space. The four large pillars which will be remembered as supporting the roof in the body of the church, were added at this time. Of course by this movement, the ridge-pole was elevated above its former height, and the roof on the east elongated as well as on the west. The tower and also the south porch were moved westward a few feet, to correspond with the new ridge line.

By a typographical error in the history of Quincy, this enlargement of the church is assigned to 1806. The number of weeks employed in the work may be inferred from the following entries made by Rev. Mr. Whitney in his private diary of preaching.

1805, July 21. "We had no meeting; our meeting house was opened." "July 28. No meeting at Quincy, I preached for Mr. Whitney of Hingham." On the first sabbath of August, worship was resumed. November 17, following, is recorded in the diary. "No meeting.—painting pews, &c." November 24, worship was resumed.

It will be remembered by those who recall the old church, that it rested for underpinning on two rows of neatly hammered stone, and that the door steps were of similar material. The church as originally constructed had not this; but it was added about 1790. The town contemplated putting the hammered stone only under three walls of the church, leaving the back, or east side in its first rough finish. Now this side of the church looked towards Thompson Baxter's house in which Rev. Mr. Wibird boarded, and was that which the pastor first approached in coming to his pulpit. He heard of the purpose of the town, and exclaimed, 'why should not my side be hammered stone too!' It must be; I will pay for it myself." And, according to his accustomed liberality, he actually insisted on defraying the cost of that part of the stone. It was not uncommon, as I learned from my father, his successor in the ministry, for Rev. Mr. Wibird to look over the list of rates prepared for the payment of his salary, and erase some names, saying, 'this man has been unfortunate,'—or 'such an one needs the money more than I do,'—and thus, deductions were frequently made from his stated stipend. The hammered stones above named were used in the underpinning of the houses erected from the materials of the old church on Cottage Avenue.

When the church was taken down, the owners of pews, by a quit-claim deed, which is in the possession of the parish treasurer Mr. Lewis Bass, and which he courteously loaned to me for these minutes, relinquished all right and title thereto,—each owner signing and sealing, and receiving fifty dollars for a pew below, and ten dollars for one above. As owners & occupants could not be described on the diagram, we add a brief notice of each—giving from the deed, the owners on the final disposition of the edifice.

No. 1. Owner, President John Quincy Adams. His oldest son George Washington Adams, attorney, of H. U., 1821, signs for him. President John Adams, former owner, died July 4, 1826, in his 91st year. His wife, Abigail died October 28, 1818, aged 74. He was never absent from church forenoon, or afternoon, when in Quincy; and was accustomed in the latter years of his life

- to sit on the short seat across the head of the pew. His son, the President, as punctual at church, died February 23, 1848, in his 81st year. His widow, Louisa Catharine, died May 15, 1852, aged 77. For pedigree of Adams family see vol. vii. p. 39 of this Register.
- No. 2. Owner, Daniel Greenleaf who came from Boston 1797, and many years after, bought and occupied both the pew and the large and beautiful estate of Moses Black,—the original estate of Edmund, ancestor of the Quincy family. Mr. Greenleaf died March 25, 1853, aged 90 years, 6 mos. His wife died January 6, 1839, aged 73. He was brother to John of pew No. 70, and cousin to Thomas of pew No. 18, also cousin to his own wife Elizabeth Greenleaf.
- No. 3. Owner, George Nightingale, formerly town clerk and treasurer; who died Feb. 25, 1864, aged 77 years, 9 mos. Seth Burrill occupied before him. Asa Pope also occupied.
- No. 4. Owner, Cotton Tufts, H. U. 1777, died 1833, aged 76. This family lived in Weymouth, attending constantly here. He was son of Dr. Cotton Tufts of Weymouth, H. U. 1749, and father of Quincy Tufts, who is still merchant at No. 105 Washington street, Boston, where he has been engaged longer than any other single trader, or firm on the street.
- No. 5. Owner, Isaac Riddle of Quincy Point. Nathan Josselyn also occupied it.
- No. 6. Owner, Anthony Wibird Baxter from the west part of the town, died Sept., 1822. His widow Catharine signs the deed, as executrix.
- No. 7. Owner, William Hayden, Sen., deed signed for him by Wm. Hayden, jr., attorney. Judge Thomas Boylston Adams, of H. U. 1790, son of President John Adams occupied it. He died, 1832.
- No. 8. Owner, George W. Beale (see No. 85.) Occupied by John Briesler, merchant, now of the firm of Briesler & Whitney, Quincy.
- No. 9. Owners, Hannah Miller and her son Edward, of H. U. 1813, attorney. He died 1842.
- No. 10. Owner, Josiah Quincy. He owned, also, pew No. 34, and by a door connected the two for greater accommodation. This venerable statesman and true patriot, now in his 93d year, passed the last summer as usual, at his country seat at Quincy, where his ancestors settled and worshipped more than two centuries ago.
- No. 11. Owner, Capt. Oliver Jenkins from Quincy Point; died August, 1829. Occupants Ebenezer Shaw, and Perez Chubbuck, also of the Point.
- No. 12. Owners jointly and occupants, Benjamin and Job Faxon.
- No. 13. “ “ “ “ Joseph Brackett, and widow Jerusha Newcomb.
- No. 14. Owner, James Hall. Occupants, Abner Willett, and Daniel French proprietor of the old tavern, afterwards called the Hancock House.
- No. 15. Owner, Elijah Spear, who owned and occupied 'till his death, the house still standing near the head of the Quincy canal, in which Rev. Mr. Wibird lived, unmarried, through his ministry, then the estate of Thompson Baxter.
- No. 16. Owner, Jonathan Beale, whose house was on the western border of Quincy, close upon the Milton line.
- No. 17. Owners, Heirs of Samuel Spear. He lived at Hough's Neck, Quincy. The deed is signed by Daniel Baxter, jr. in behalf of the heirs.
- No. 18. Owner, Thomas Greenleaf, of H. U. 1784. He came from Boston in 1803—though a temporary resident here from 1790. His house in which he lived more than fifty years, west, beyond President Adams's, once belonged to Rev. Dr. Charles Chauncy of first church, Boston, who lived here for a few months of several successive years. Mr. Greenleaf died Jan. 5, 1854, in his 87th year. His widow Mary Deming (Price) died Feb. 22, 1856, in her 89th year. He was brother to the wife of Daniel, of pew No. 2. See Rev. Dr. Lunt's discourse after his death, for historical and genealogical notices.
- No. 19. Owner, Capt. Josiah Bass, whose estate on Neponset turnpike connected with Hon. Josiah Quincy's.
- No. 20. Owner, Deacon Daniel Spear. It was before owned by Theophilus Thayer; then by George his son. Josiah Brigham, merchant, occupied it.
- No. 21. Owner, Oliver Jenkins as of No. 11.
- No. 22. Owner, James Mayo of Quincy Point. Deed signed by his widow Lucinda. It was occupied by Capt. Ezra Prior's family, also of Quincy Point.
- No. 23. Owner, Edward W. Baxter's estate. Josiah Baxter signs deed for one-half of it. John Colman also occupied it.
- No. 24. Parish pew for minister's family.



- No. 25. Owner, James Baxter, whose estate adjoined Thomas Greenleaf's.
- No. 26. Owners and occupants jointly, Deacon Daniel Spear, and Nedabiah Bent.
- No. 27. Owner, Jonathan Baxter of Quincy Point.
- No. 28. Owner, Bryant Newcomb, who also owned a pew in the east end of the south gallery where he always sat himself.
- No. 29. Owner, Adam Curtis, occupied, also by his brother Samuel, sons of Noah, and all extensively engaged in the manufacture of boots.
- No. 30. Owner, Noah Curtis from Pain's Hill, town treasurer.
- No. 31. Owner, Deacon Samuel Savil, occupied also by his son Josiah Savil.
- No. 32. Owner, Ebenezer Crane, occupied, also by his son-in-law, Josiah Nightingale.
- No. 33. Owner, Wm. Baxter, jr., occupied also by Paul Wild.
- No. 34. Owner, Josiah Quincy, connecting with No. 10.
- No. 35. Owner, Frederick Hardwick.
- No. 36. Owner, Josiah Bass, as of No. 19.
- No. 37. Owners, Edmund Billings' estate, by Lemuel Brackett administrator, one-third,—Jerusha and Mary Billings, each, one-third.
- No. 38. Owner, Daniel Greenleaf (as of No. 2), occupied by his sister Priscilla, widow of John Appleton, and her son Alfred.
- No. 39. Owner, George H. Apthorp. The deed is signed for him by Rev. Benjamin Clark Cutler, of the Episcopal church, Quincy. Aaron Mason, also, occupied, of the firm of Chamberlin and Mason, wheelwrights.
- No. 40. Owner, Lemuel Brackett (see No. 54), occupied by Ebenezer Green.
- No. 41. Owner, Lemuel Pope, from Squantum, north-east part of the town.
- No. 42. Owner, John Savil, son of Deacon Samuel Savil.
- No. 43. Owner, John Souther, shipwright at Souther's wharf, Quincy.
- No. 44. Owner, James Hall, son of Capt. John Hall, former owner.
- No. 45. Owner, Ezra Glover.
- No. 46. Owner, Jesse Penno. Deed signed by Daniel Spear, executor.
- No. 47. Owners, Edward Glover, Polly Glover administratrix, one-half each.
- No. 48. Owner, General Thomas Taylor, from "the Farms."
- No. 49. Owner, John Quincy Adams; deed signed as No. 1. John Spear occupied.
- No. 50. Owners, Samuel and Ebenezer Rawson, one-half each.
- No. 51. Owner, Deacon Josiah Adams, occupied also by his son Josiah, jr. Deacon Adams died April 24, 1844, aged 80. He and his brothers of pews Nos. 67 and 77, were second cousins to President John Q. Adams. Deacon Adams' widow, Margaret died Feb. 3, 1849, wanting 9 days of 75 years.
- No. 52. Owner, John Bass, kindly remembered by many; living on Granite street to an advanced age, his sister Polly with him,—both unmarried. Occupied also by William Seaver, teacher. Dr. Woodward, Dart. Col. 1817, present senior physician of Quincy, when entering on his practise, forty years ago, sat here.
- No. 53. Owner, Elisha T. Crane. Occupied also by Ebenezer Nightingale. This pew formerly belonged to Thompson Baxter, with whom Rev. Mr. Wibird lived.
- No. 54. Owner, Lemuel Brackett. Belonged, formerly, to his father James, who died August 16, 1825, in his 90th year, a constant attendant at church, and, in his latter years, sitting in the pulpit by reason of deafness. The present owner as constant an attendant at church and still in excellent health, in his 84th year, living (probably oldest man in town) at his house on Hancock street, which he built in 1826, when he left the very ancient house of his father. He is great-great-grand son of the original ancestor, Capt. Richard Brackett, Deacon, Boston, 1632,—who, with wife Alice, joined Braintree, now Quincy, first church,—town clerk,—third captain of the town, which office, by reason of infirmities, he begged to lay down in 1684, and the court appointed Edm. Quincy to succeed him. Richard gave a silver cup to the church which is inscribed with the initials of him and his wife, after the ancient custom, thus  

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He died March 5, 1690, aged 80. See Savage; also Genealogical sketch of the Brackett family by the late Jeffrey Richardson, jr., grand son of Lemuel B., and member of N. E. Hist. and Gen. Society.
- No. 55. Owners, jointly, Capt. James Brackett, older brother of Lemuel, and Thomas Phipps as administrator. It was occupied also in latter years of the church by the families of William Whall and Charles Park. Capt. Brackett kept a store by his house, which was on the north east corner of Hancock and



- Elm streets. The old town hay scales, unlike what we see now, stood in front of this store. This house was built in 1794-5, by James, father of Capt. James, and was on the site of the old well known Brackett tavern kept by James, grand father of Capt. James. Capt. James Brackett removed from Quincy in 1825, to Philadelphia; and, after residing some years at Greenport, L. I., died at Philadelphia, April 18, 1855, in his 86th year.
- No. 56. Owner, Dr. Thomas Phipps, who succeeded his father, Dr. Thomas, of H. U., 1757, as physician in Quincy, and who fell dead, August 30, 1832, from ossification of heart, as he was leaving his house on School street, walking to the Town Hall, to meet the officers of the regiment and resign his commission as its surgeon. He was at Cambridge commencement, with his family, seeming never in better health, on the day before, when his son Harrison Gray Otis Phipps, afterwards minister at Cohasset, took part on graduating. The first owner of this pew was Capt. Joseph Neal Arnold who was named for old Deacon Neal.
- No. 57. Owner, Capt. James Brackett of No. 55. Lewis Baxter occupied it.
- No. 58. Owner, Henry Hardwick, who lived at the foot of Pain's Hill.
- No. 59. Owner, Peter Keating. His son-in-law Lemuel Baxter, and Thomas Nightingale also occupied it.
- No. 60. Owner, Elijah Spear, of No. 15. Occupied by Moses Reed Marsh, and Edmund, brothers, who carried on a boot factory on Hancock street, opposite house of L. Brackett.
- No. 61. Owner, Elisha Marsh, who died April 17, 1847, aged 65. His widow Lucy died Jan. 23, 1864, aged 81. Former owner, his father, Wilson Marsh, who died July 7, 1828, aged 78. Wilson was great-grand son of the original ancestor, Lieut. Alexander Marsh, Freeman, 1654, who married probably, Dec. 19, 1655, Mary, dau. of Gregory Belcher, and died March 7, 1683, aged about 70. Alexander's son John was father, probably, of John, of H. U., 1723.
- No. 62. Owner of one-half, Wm. Newcomb. Occupied also by his sons.
- No. 63. Owner, John Pray, who died at an advanced age; father of Lewis G. Pray, long engaged in business in Boston, now residing at Roxbury.
- No. 64. Owners, jointly, Joseph Field from the foot of Pain's Hill, and William Baxter, School street.
- No. 65. Owners, jointly, Jedediah and Peter Adams, brothers; from whose estate on Sea street, Rev. P. Whitney purchased land in 1801, on which to erect his house, and subsequently, in 1809.
- No. 66. Owners, jointly, Wm. Spear; and Daniel Hobart, Sexton for many years.
- No. 67. Owner, Ebenezer Adams. He died June 10, 1841, aged 79 years, 1 mo. His widow Elizabeth, died September 26, 1856, aged 81 years, 20 days. John Whitney merchant at Quincy Point, also occupied it, who died Jan. 2, 1850, in his 65th year. He was brother, and the wives of Ebenezer Adams, of Deacon Josiah Adams, and of Lemuel Brackett were sisters of Rev. Peter Whitney. Mr. Adams bought this pew of the estate of Gen. Palmer, who lived at Germantown.
- No. 68. Owner, Lewis Bass, now living on Granite street:—Parish treasurer, son of Deacon Jonathan Bass, former owner.
- No. 69. Owner, Wm. James, jr., Hannah Bent and mother, also occupied it.
- No. 70. Owner, John Greenleaf, formerly judge Richard Cranch's pew, whose dau. Lucy he married April 4, 1795. His estate was the ancient Cranch estate on School street. He was son of sheriff Wm. Greenleaf of Boston. Rev. Dr. Lunt, in the appendix to his sermon after the death of Hon. Thomas Greenleaf, says, "there were two sheriffs of Suffolk at that time, and what is remarkable, they were brothers, one a Tory, Stephen Greenleaf, and the other, Wm. Greenleaf, an ardent Whig." A sister of Mr. John Greenleaf, Nancy, married his wife's brother, judge Wm. Cranch of Washington. Mr. Greenleaf died March 29, 1848, aged 84 years 6 mo. His wife died previous, Feb. 18, 1846, aged 79 years. Her mother and President John Adams's wife were sisters,—the daughters of Rev. Wm. Smith of Weymouth. Dr. Lunt concludes his excellent sermon on Mr. Thomas Greenleaf in these words. "And may it be our felicity, when our earthly work shall be ended, to leave behind us as untarnished a name, and as distinct, as unequivocal, and as reliable evidences of a useful and honorable life, as have been left behind him by the venerated friend, fellow-townsmen, and fellow-worshipper upon whose grave I lay this humble tribute of affectionate respect." And of Mr. John Greenleaf Dr. Lunt writes, as above. "This venerable man had been blind from his youth; but the care which his condition required was an office of love, and never a

burden through his uniform cheerfulness and Christian goodness. Mr. and Mrs. Greenleaf were among the excellent of the earth; and the memory of their quiet worth is cherished in many hearts." Mr. G., we may add, though blind, was a constant attendant at church. He was likewise, proficient on the organ and other musical instruments.

- No. 71. Owners, Peter Brackett, one-eighth; Betsey Brackett, one-fourth and two-tenths; Mary P. Adams, one-eighth; Frances Spear, Mehitable and Sarah Nightingale, one-tenth, each.
- No. 72. Owner, Daniel Spear. John Billings and Mrs. Faxon also occupied it.
- No. 73. Owner, Wm. Wood, master builder of the new stone church. The family of Thomas Crane, also occupied it.
- No. 74. Owner, Peter Bicknell from Germantown, south east part of Quincy.
- No. 75. Owners, Horatio N. Glover, one half; Nathaniel Glover and Thomas Adams, one-quarter, each.
- No. 76. Owner Jonathan Marsh, son of Wilson of pew No. 61. He was much interested in historical and genealogical research, and a subscriber to this *Register*. He endured a long and painful confinement in Christian patience and hope, and died, December 10, 1861, aged 74 years, 8 mos, 5 days. See a full notice in this *Register*, vol. 15, p. 179.
- No. 77. Owner, Thomas Adams, whose estate was on Neponset Turnpike. He was brother of Deacon Josiah and Ebenezer.
- No. 78. Owner, Solomon Nightingale. James Green also occupied it.
- No. 79. Owner, Adam Hardwick.
- No. 80. Owners, Jonathan Cook and Daniel Spear.
- No. 81. Owner, William Wood. George Veasie occupied it. Deacon Elijah Veasie, his father, formerly.
- No. 82. Owners, Oliver Billings, one-half; George M. Gibbens, one-quarter; Geo. B. Billings, one-quarter.
- No. 83. Owner, John Dwelle from Pain's Hill. Henry, brother of Wm. Wood, also occupied it.
- No. 84. Owners, Luther Spear, two-thirds; Frances, widow of Seth Spear, one-third.
- No. 85. Owner, George W. Beale. He fell dead in his yard, of disease of the heart, Nov. 19, 1851, aged 69. His father, Capt Benjamin Beale, former owner, died in 1825, at a very advanced age. Their large and beautiful estate adjoined President Adams' on the west.
- No. 86. Owner, Peter Boylston Adams, brother to President John Adams. He died at a very advanced age. The deed is signed by Peter Turner as Guardian of Peter Boylston Adams, for one-third; Mary Turner for one-third; and Davis Boardman for one-third. Elisha Turner, also occupied it.
- No. 87. Parish pew for town's poor.

The quit-claim deed relinquishing the pews, contains the signatures of the following persons who gave up pews in the galleries: Bryant Newcomb; Capt. Benjamin Page; Alpheus and Lemuel Spear, brothers, one; George Spear; Ebenezer Bent; Thomas Adams; Solomon and Josiah Nightingale, one; Ezra Glover; Daniel Spear. The first four pews were in the east end of the south gallery and were occupied by the owners. The others were on the back of the west gallery, most of the owners occupying their pews below.

The following vote relates to the pews in the south gallery, only. "Monday October 6, 1828. Voted that the persons owning pews in the gallery of the old meeting house may have the right of taking away the iron railings and curtains in front of their pews."

At the same meeting,—“Voted to put a new dial and glass to the clock now belonging to the parish, and put the same upon the new meeting house.”

This clock is the one now on the west or singers' gallery of the new stone temple. It was a gift—as appears by the following vote from the town records, the old first parish then comprising the town,—

"Sept 30, 1799,—Voted that the thanks of the town be returned to President Adams and Mr. Moses Black for the present to the town of a clock in the meeting house."

We come now to the destruction of the old church, venerable, in wanting to its age but four years of a complete century. Owing to the increase of the inhabitants of the town and to the somewhat singular non-increase of religious societies, the edifice was found far too small for the accommodation of all who wished to worship in it. A new and larger one was contemplated. The bequests of President Adams, sen., of some granite quarries, made to the town in 1822, with the request that from them a temple should be erected by the first parish, were a further incitement to the work; and on the 6th of Nov., 1826, the report of a committee appointed on the 11th of April previous, recommending the erection of a stone church, was almost unanimously accepted by the parish. The cellar was commenced on the 9th of April, 1827, the corner stone was laid with appropriate religious ceremonies on the 11th of June following, and the church was dedicated on Wednesday, November 12, 1828.\* The account of the exercises, together with the address delivered at the laying of the corner stone by the pastor, Rev. Mr. Whitney, while the old church was still standing, may be found in the appendix to the history of Quincy. The new edifice was located on the north west of the old, and immediately contiguous. The portico of the new stone church, if shown in this plate, would appear directly fronting the observer, on the left of the old tower. So close, indeed, were the corners of the two buildings, that in order to complete the right end of the stone portico, it was necessary to remove the tower of the old church. On the 28th March, 1828, the tower was accordingly sold at public auction. It was bid off, with its underpinning and the door steps belonging with it, to Mr. John Spear, for seventy dollars. The vane and ball on the cupola were bid off separately from the tower, to Mr. Henry Wood, for three dollars and twenty-five cents, and were placed on his barn near his house in Quincy, where they now remain. On the eighth of April following the bell was moved from the cupola to the north-west end of the roof; and on the fourteenth, in the presence of a large number of spectators, the cupola was thrown down to the ground with a loud crash, the pillars having been sawn off. The writer of this sketch was present, and recorded in a diary at the time the incidents as here related. The cupola was found to be much decayed. The tower was wholly removed in a few days, being taken down in pieces.

Thus the old edifice stood towerless through the summer, while the new temple was progressing by its side. On the 3d of October, as the latter drew towards its completion, the bell was drawn up from its summer position on the old roof to the cupola of the new church, without at all coming to the ground, leaving the old house ready to be taken down. Here the society gathered for the last time, for re-

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\* Beneath this granite church, in a massive tomb, repose the remains of President John Adams and wife, and President John Quincy Adams and wife. In the interior of the church are mural monuments with appropriate inscriptions,—copies of which may be found in the *Register*, vol. ix. p. 155.

ligious worship, on Sunday, October twelfth. In the afternoon, the pastor, Rev. Mr. Whitney, delivered a farewell discourse, appropriate to the occasion, from the words of the Prophet Zechariah I, 5. "Your Fathers, where are they? and the Prophets, do they live forever?" The following beautiful hymn, originally written for a similar occasion, by Rev. Dr. Flint, of Salem, was printed, distributed in the pews, and sung at the close of the service :—

## (1.)

Here to the High and Holy One,  
Our fathers early reared  
A house of prayer, a lowly one,  
Yet long to them endeared  
By hours of sweet communion,  
Held with their covenant God,  
As oft, in sacred union,  
His hallowed courts they trod.

## (2.)

Gone are the pious multitudes  
That here kept holy time,  
In other courts assembled now,  
For worship more sublime.  
Their children we are waiting  
In meekness, Lord, thy call;  
Thy love still celebrating,  
Our hope, our trust, our all.

## (3.)

These time-worn walls, the resting place,  
So oft, from earthly cares,  
To righteous souls now perfected,  
We leave with thanks and prayers;  
With thanks for every blessing  
Vouchsafed through all the past,  
With prayers, thy throne addressing,  
For guidance to the last.

## (4.)

Though from this house, so long beloved,  
We part with sadness now;  
Yet here, we trust, with gladness, soon  
In fairer courts to bow;  
So when our souls, forsaking  
These bodies fallen, and pale,  
In brighter forms awaking,  
With joy the change shall hail.

It was not without emotions of regret that for the last time the congregation "trode those hallowed courts" where, through childhood or manhood and age, they had gone to praise and pray. The associations of earlier times gathered in that hour and place; and many like "the priests, levites and chief of the fathers who were ancient men," of whom the prophet tells us, "remembering the former days, wept" that no more they should go up to "the former house of the Lord."

In the afternoon of the next day the old church was sold at public auction by Deacon Daniel Spear; the tower, as we have seen, having been disposed of before. Its parts were separately sold and in the following order: The pulpit window, broad and handsome, with a semi-circular top, alone, had inside blinds, and these were first sold to Isaac Dodge for \$3.00. The stove, standing on the north-west side, opposite the tower door, was sold, with its appurtenances, to David Riddle, Esq., for \$42.50. The pulpit and pews below were also sold to him for \$53.00. The residue of the building was sold to Ebenezer Adams, for \$202. Stone underpinning and steps were sold to Cotton Pratt for \$82.50. Total \$383.00. Net proceeds of the old



church, including the former sale of tower, \$456.25. In the course of ten days it was wholly taken down and the spot graded, there having been no cellar beneath the building; and on the 12th of November following, as we have seen, the present stone church, erected at a cost of thirty-five thousand dollars, from granite quarries bequeathed for the purpose, by President John Adams, was dedicated. The society worshipped in the Town Hall on three Sabbaths previous to the dedication, religious services being suspended on the first Sabbath after the destruction of the old church edifice.

The materials of the old edifice were, in the following spring, converted into four dwelling houses still standing on a street then first opened for the purpose, now called Cottage Avenue, running from Webb's bridge on Hancock street, to Sea street. The houses were erected by Mr. Adams, who, as has been seen, purchased the building and who, with Samuel Capen of Braintree, owned the land and opened the street. This land belonged, originally, to Rev. Mr. Tompson, first minister of the church, and was long known as "the Tompson lot." Near its northern boundary was the residence of Rev. Mr. Flint, the associate of Mr. Tompson, who owned the estate of Jedadiah Adams, then including the estate of the late minister, Rev. P. Whitney.

We append a complete list of the ministers who have been settled over this ancient religious society. The principal portion of Rev. Mr. Hancock's ministry, the ministries of Rev. Messrs. Briant and Wibird, and most of the ministry of Rev. Mr. Whitney, were in the church here commemorated. The latter portion of Rev. Mr. Whitney's ministry, the ministries of Rev. Messrs. Lunt and Wells were in the present stone church.

I. Rev. William Tompson, born in Lancashire, England. 1598; educated at Oxford. The exact year of his arrival here is uncertain. Eminent for zeal and eloquence as a preacher in England. Ordained here, November 19, 1639, (the church having been gathered Sept. 17, 1639), and died December 10, 1666, in the 69th year of his age. He ceased from his public labors as a preacher in 1659, by reason of ill-health.

II. Rev. Henry Flynt (associate), teacher, came to this country in 1635, probably from Matlock, Derbyshire, England; ordained here, March 17, 1639-40, and died April 27, 1668, aged 61.

III. Rev. Moses Fiske, son of Rev. John Fiske, of Wenham, Mass., graduate H. U., 1662; ordained Sept. 11, 1672, and died August 10, 1708, in the 66th year of his age.

IV. Rev. Joseph Marsh, H. U. 1705, son of Daniel Marsh, of Hadley; admitted to Cambridge church, November 28, 1703, as "Joseph Marsh, student," was ordained May 18, 1709, and died March 8, 1725-6, in 41st year of his age.

V. Rev. John Hancock, H. U., 1719, son of Rev. John Hancock, of Lexington, H. U. 1689, was ordained, Nov. 2, 1726, and died, May 7, 1744, in 42d year of his age. His discourses in 1739, on the completion of the first century of the church, were published. He dedicated, as we have seen, the edifice here represented; he died May 7, 1744, in the 42d year of his age. John Hancock, the patriot, President of the Continental Congress, was his son and second child.



VI. Rev. Lemuel Briant, H. U., 1739, son of Thomas Briant, of Scituate, Mass, was ordained December 4, 1745; dismissed at his request on account of ill health, October 22, 1753, and died at Hingham, October 1, 1754, aged 32 years, and was interred at Scituate.

VII. Rev. Anthony Wibird, H. U., 1747, born at Portsmouth, N. H., was ordained February 5, 1755, and died unmarried, Wednesday, June 4, 1800, aged 72, and was interred on 7th. For a few of the latter years of his ministry he was unable, from bodily infirmities, to attend upon the duties of his office.

VIII. Rev. Peter Whitney, H. U., 1791, born at Northboro, January 19, 1770, son of Rev. Peter Whitney of Northboro, of H. U., 1762, and grandson of Rev. Aaron Whitney, of Peterham, of H. U., 1737, ordained February 5, 1800, and died suddenly, as his father died, March 3, 1843, in 74th year of his age and 44th of his ministry.

IX. Rev. William Parsons Lunt, D. D., H. U., 1823, was born in Newburyport, April 21, 1805; son of Henry Lunt; ordained over the 2d congregational (Unitarian) church, New York city, June 19, 1828; left, November, 1833; installed associate pastor with Rev. Mr. Whitney, June 3, 1835. Surviving his aged colleague fourteen years he died at Ezion-Geber, on a fond tour to Jerusalem, March 21, 1857, in the 52nd year of his age and 22nd of his ministry at Quincy. His discourses in 1839, on the completion of the 2d century of the church, were published with valuable historical notes.

X. Rev. John Doane Wells, H. U., 1854, son of Rev. George Wadsworth Wells, H. U., 1823, was born at Kennebunk, Me., and was ordained at Quincy, December 27, 1860.—Present pastor.

The remains of all the deceased ministers, except Messrs. Briant and Lunt, repose in the ancient burial-ground, opposite the first church. See vol. ix, p. 151 of this Register. Two beautiful mural monuments in marble have been erected in this church, commemorative of the eighth and ninth ministers, Rev. Messrs. Whitney and Lunt, by their parishoners. They are placed opposite similar monuments commemorative of the two Presidents, alluded to in the article here presented, and bear appropriate inscriptions both from the pen of Rev. Nathaniel L. Frothingham, D. D., of First Church, Boston.

We have spoken minutely of this ancient edifice, remembering that facts and events which, because connected with our own time, we perhaps little regard, soon pass into history, and their record posterity thanks us for and prizes. We love to look on this old plate. It calls back memories and associations dear and hallowed. It tells of the wise and good who so long united in the services of the church; of the chiefs of the Nation, who, from the strife and turmoil of political life, and from the council chambers of state, came on the peaceful sabbath, to sit beneath its Sanctuary, and at its Communion Table to commemorate the Saviour, and at its Altar to pray, where in infancy they had been baptized. It speaks of a great company of the meek and pious; of beautiful children; of young men and maidens; of fathers and mothers, who with the early spring and the falling leaves of successive years, went out from its worship to lie down in the silent grave. It tells of many words of counsel, warning and reproof; of consolation, strength

and hope, uttered sabbath after sabbath within its walls from revered lips long stilled. Its solemn voice, like the well-remembered echo of its uncarpeted aisles, yet speaks impressively of the change of all things earthly, and pleads with us for faithfulness to the Present from the hallowed Past.

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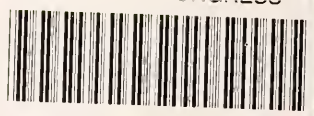
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